

## Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 062051 ACTION AMMAN BEIRUT CAIRO DAMASCUS  
JIDDA LONDON TEL AVIV TRIPOLI RABAT PARIS MOSCOW TEHRAN KHARTOUM  
ROME USUN NEW YORK NATO SANA TUNIS MANAMA BAGHDAD DOHA ABU DHABI  
NOUAKCHOTT JERUSALEM MOGADISCIO SINAI DHAHRAN GENEVA KUWAIT  
CINCEUR MAR 13 REPEATED NICOSIA MAR 15.

QUOTE: UNCLAS STATE 062051

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS  
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 12,  
1976:

MR. FUNSETH: GOOD AFTERNOON. MR. EAGLEBURGER, THE DEPUTY  
UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT, HAS A FEW OPENING REMARKS  
TO MAKE ABOUT THE QUESTION THAT HAS BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION  
OF UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES. HE WILL THEN BE PREPARED TO  
ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

MR. EAGLEBURGER.

Q. IS THIS ON BACKGROUND?

MR. FUNSETH: IT IS ON THE RECORD.

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MR. EAGLEBURGER: I AM HERE TO REPORT TO YOU BRIEFLY TODAY ON THE RESULTS OF OUR EXAMINATION OF THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE LEAKING OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION --

Q. A LITTLE SLOWER.

MR. EAGLEBURGER: -- EVENTS SURROUNDING THE LEAKING OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION WHICH APPEARED IN AN ARTICLE BY MR. SHEEHAN IN FOREIGN POLICY.

OUR EXAMINATION INTO THIS MATTER BEGAN ON FEBRUARY 27TH. ON MARCH 5, THE SECRETARY INTERVIEWED MR. ROY ATHERTON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR NEAR EAST AFFAIRS, IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS, MR. ATHERTON'S RETURN FROM A TRIP TO NORTH AFRICA AND EUROPE.

AT THAT TIME, MR. ATHERTON TOLD THE SECRETARY THAT HE HAD IN FACT READ TO MR. SHEEHAN FROM CLASSIFIED MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATION.

ON MARCH 9, MR. ATHERTON VOLUNTARILY CAME FORWARD WITH A LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OUTLINING HIS PART IN THIS MATTER, AND TAKING FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DECISION TO READ TO MR. SHEEHAN FROM CLASSIFIED MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATION.

THE LETTER WAS NOT SOLICITED BY ANYONE IN THE DEPARTMENT, AND IT WAS NOT REVIEWED BY ANYONE SENIOR TO MR. ATHERTON PRIOR TO ITS DELIVERY TO THE SECRETARY.

IN SHORT, THE LETTER WAS AT MR. ATHERTON'S INITIATIVE, AND ITS CONTENTS WERE THE PRODUCT OF MR. ATHERTON ALONE.

IN THAT LETTER, MR. ATHERTON SAID THAT HE WAS THE PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL WHO MET WITH MR. SHEEHAN, THAT HE -- THAT IS, MR. ATHERTON -- HAD RECEIVED THE SECRETARY'S GENERAL APPROVAL TO GIVE MR. SHEEHAN BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS, AND THAT IT WAS UNDER MR. ATHERTON'S DIRECTION -- I BEG YOUR PARDON -- AND THAT IT WAS FROM MR. UNCLASSIFIED

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ATHERTON, OR UNDER MR. ATHERTON'S DIRECTION THAT MR. SHEEHAN -- AND HERE I QUOTE -- "OBTAINED SUCH INFORMATION IN HIS ARTICLE AS WAS BASED UPON DEPARTMENT OF STATE MEMORANDA OF YOUR" THAT IS THE SECRETARY'S -- "CONVERSATIONS." END QUOTE.

MR. ATHERTON ALSO STATES IN HIS LETTER THAT HE MADE THE DECISION ON WHAT INFORMATION TO CONVEY TO MR. SHEEHAN,

AND HOW TO DO IT, AND THAT HE NEITHER INFORMED THE SECRETARY NOR RECEIVED THE SECRETARY'S AUTHORIZATION FOR THE PROCEDURES HE FOLLOWED IN BRIEFING MR. SHEEHAN.

MR. ATHERTON'S LETTER TO THE SECRETARY MAKES CLEAR THAT IN ORDER TO SUPPLEMENT FACTUAL INFORMATION THAT HE HAD

GIVEN TO MR. SHEEHAN, ATHERTON DID BRIEF MR. SHEEHAN ORALLY FROM MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATION, FOR THE MOST PART SUMMARIZING OR PARAPHRASING SELECTED PORTIONS OF THOSE MEMORANDA.

NO COPIES OF MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATION WERE GIVEN TO MR. SHEEHAN, NOR WAS HE PERMITTED TO READ THEM.

FURTHER, NO PRESIDENTIAL CONVERSATIONS WITH HEADS OF STATE OR CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT WERE DESCRIBED BY MR. ATHERTON OR ANYONE ELSE IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO MR. SHEEHAN.

WE ARE CONVINCED THAT ANY REPORTS TO MR. SHEEHAN ON SUCH CONVERSATIONS CAME FROM SOURCES OUTSIDE THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

ONE OTHER OFFICER THEN IN THE BUREAU OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS -- MR. HAL SAUNDERS -- DID, ON ONE OCCASION, READ BRIEFLY FROM A MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION TO MR. SHEEHAN. HE DID SO UNDER MR. ATHERTON'S DIRECTION, WHICH MR. ATHERTON HAS CONFIRMED.

AS A RESULT OF MR. ATHERTON'S STATEMENT TO THE SECRETARY OF HIS ROLE IN PROVIDING MR. SHEEHAN WITH INFORMATION FROM MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATION, THE SECRETARY HAS OFFICIALLY UNCLASSIFIED

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ALLY AND SEVERELY REPRIMANDED MR. ATHERTON. THIS REPRIMAND WILL BE MADE A PART OF MR. ATHERTON'S PERSONNEL FILE. HE HAS ALSO REPRIMANDED MR. SAUNDERS, ALTHOUGH THIS SECOND REPRIMAND IS OF A LESS SEVERE NATURE, GIVEN THE FACT THAT MR. SAUNDERS WAS ACTING UNDER MR. ATHERTON'S DIRECTIONS.

THE SECRETARY HAD AT ONE POINT CONSIDERED RELEASING BOTH MR. ATHERTON'S LETTER TO HIM AND HIS LETTER TO MR. ATHERTON. HOWEVER, AFTER FURTHER CONSIDERATION, IT WAS DECIDED THAT I WOULD BRIEF YOU, AS I HAVE, AND THAT THE EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE WOULD REMAIN BETWEEN THE PEOPLE DIRECTLY CONCERNED.

LET ME FURTHER STATE THAT NEITHER THE SECRETARY NOR I

HAVE ANY DOUBT AS TO THE GOOD INTENTIONS OF ANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS AFFAIR. MR. ATHERTON AND MR. SAUNDERS WERE MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO EXPLAIN OUR MIDDLE EAST POLICY AND NOTHING MORE. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WAS CLEARLY A SUBSTANTIAL ERROR IN JUDGMENT ON THE PART OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS INVOLVED.

IN ORDER TO DO WHAT WE CAN TO ASSURE THAT THIS KIND OF MISTAKE DOES NOT HAPPEN AGAIN, WE WILL, TODAY, ISSUE A DIRECTIVE TO ALL ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, REMINDING THEM AND THEIR SUBORDINATES THAT THEY ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO READ FROM OR USE CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS TO BRIEF MEMBERS OF THE PRESS OR OTHER UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS. IT WILL BE MADE CLEAR IN THIS DIRECTIVE THAT THERE ARE TO BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE, SO THAT NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO ASSUME OR ARGUE THAT BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS MAY GO INTO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION IN THE MANNER DESCRIBED.

FINALLY, LET ME SAY THAT SO FAR AS THE SECRETARY AND I ARE CONCERNED, THIS CLOSES OUR EXAMINATION OF THE SHEEHAN MATTER, AND THAT NO FURTHER ACTION WILL BE TAKEN.

Q. MR. EAGLEBURGER --

A. YES, SIR.

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Q. COULD YOU SAY WHAT LEVEL OF CLASSIFICATION THE MEMCON'S HAD?

A. I WOULD HAVE TO CHECK THAT. I WOULD ASSUME THEY ARE SECRET, BUT I WILL CHECK IT.

Q. IS THE LETTER THAT YOU JUST READ FROM FROM MR. ATHERTON CLASSIFIED?

A. NO.

Q. THIS STATEMENT SAYS THAT MR. ATHERTON AND MR. SAUNDERS SPOKE TO MR. SHEEHAN, AND WE HAVE BEEN TOLD PREVIOUSLY SECRETARY KISSINGER DID. ARE THOSE THE ONLY THREE OFFICIALS WHO HAVE BRIEFED OR TALKED TO SHEEHAN THAT YOU KNOW OF?

A. THAT I KNOW OF, YES.

Q. AND CERTAINLY MR. SISCO DIDN'T.

A. I'M SORRY, MR. SISCO DID, YES.

Q. MR. EAGLEBURGER, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOUR STATEMENT DOESN'T ANSWER ONE GENERAL QUESTION, WHICH IS THAT ALL OF US KNOW ROY ATHERTON, ALL OF US KNOW HIM TO BE CAREFUL AND A RELIABLE CIVIL SERVANT, WHO DOES NOT GO AROUND WILLINGLY RELEASING CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.

(AT COULD THERE HAVE BEEN IN HIS INSTRUCTIONS THAT GAVE HIM THE IDEA THAT HE COULD?

A. LOOK, GENTLEMEN, LET'S REMEMBER ONE THING, NOW. WE HAVE TO PUT THIS IN THIS PERSPECTIVE, IT SEEMS TO ME. THE SHEEHAN ARTICLE IS NOT SOMETHING THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE INITIATED, NOR DID HE INITIATE THE PROJECT OF COOPERATION WITH MR. SHEEHAN. THAT CAME, FIRST FROM A LETTER FROM MR. SHEEHAN TO MR. ATHERTON, FOLLOWED UP BY A MEMORANDUM FROM MR. ATHERTON TO THE SECRETARY, RECOMMENDING TO HIM THAT THE DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATE IN BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS FOR MR. SHEEHAN.

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WHAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE DID WAS TO AUTHORIZED ON THE BASIS OF THAT MEMORANDUM FROM ATHERTON IN A GENERAL WAY BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS FOR MR. SHEEHAN. FROM THAT POINT ON, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE SECRETARY'S THIRTY MINUTES WITH MR. SHEEHAN AND THE TIME ON THE PLANE, THE SECRETARY WAS ALMOST WHOLLY UNINVOLVED WITH THIS ISSUE. HE DID NOT FOLLOW IT. HE WAS NOT BRIEFED ON WHAT WAS GOING ON.

THE POINT I AM MAKING IS, HE GAVE A GENERAL AUTHORIZATION TO MR. ATHERTON TO PROVIDE BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS. THE POINT THAT THIS STATEMENT IS TRYING TO MAKE TO YOU GENTLEMEN IS THAT IN THE PROCESS OF FOLLOWING OUT HIS OWN RECOMMENDATION TO THE SECRETARY, THERE WAS A MISTAKE IN JUDGMENT MADE AS TO WHAT COULD BE GIVEN TO MR. SHEEHAN.

I CANNOT, IN OTHER WORDS, ANSWER SPECIFICALLY THAT HENRY KISSINGER SAID YOU MAY DO A, B, C, D, BUT YOU MAY NOT DO E, F, G AND H, BECAUSE IT NEVER REACHED THAT POINT.

Q. HAS ANY FOREIGN GOVERNMENT BEEN NOTIFIED FORMALLY OF THIS ACTION?

A. WHICH ACTION?

Q. WHAT YOU ARE DOING TODAY.

A. NO.

Q. ARE THEY GOING TO BE?

Q. LARRY, AS A SMALL POINT OF FACT, WAS A --

Q. WAIT A MINUTE, LET HIM ANSWER.

A. CAN WE HAVE AN ANSWER TO JERRY'S QUESTION?

A. TO WHICH?

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Q. I SAID, ARE THEY GOING TO?

A. I DO NOT KNOW. I HAVE NO IDEA. FRANKLY, IT IS SOMETHING I HAVE NOT CONSIDERED.

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THIS BLUNT QUESTION. EVER SINCE THIS INCIDENT BECAME KNOWN IN THE DEPARTMENT, WELL-INFORMED PEOPLE IN THE DEPARTMENT HAVE SAID PRIVATELY THAT MR. ATHERTON WAS GOING TO BE MADE THE FALL GUY IN THIS EXERCISE.

UNLESS WE HAVE SOME MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION AS TO EXACTLY WHAT INSTRUCTIONS WERE GIVEN TO MR. ATHERTON, THAT SUSPICION OBVIOUSLY WILL REMAIN IN THE DEPARTMENT AND IN THE PRESS. CAN YOU DO ANYTHING TO RESPOND TO THAT SUSPICION THAT MR. ATHERTON IS BEING MADE THE FALL GUY?

A. YES. FIRST OF ALL, I CANNOT CREATE INSTRUCTIONS THAT DO NOT EXIST. SECONDLY, TO ANY CHARGE THAT ROY ATHERTON IS BEING MADE A FALL GUY, I CAN ONLY SAY THAT THAT NOT ONLY IMPUTES TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE MOTIVES THAT I THINK GO BEYOND THE PALE, IT ALSO IMPUTES THE SAME THING TO MR. ATHERTON AND TO MR. SAUNDERS AND TO ME.

I WOULD NOT BE PARTY TO MAKING ROY ATHERTON A FALL GUY ON ANYTHING. HE IS A LONG-TIME FRIEND OF MINE, AS IS HAL SAUNDERS. THE SECRETARY OF STATE WOULDN'T BE PARTY TO SUCH AN ACT. AND CERTAINLY MR. ATHERTON AND MR. SAUNDERS WOULDN'T BE PARTY TO SUCH AN ACT.

Q. IN YOUR STATEMENT EARLIER, YOU SAID THAT FOR THE MOST PART, MR. ATHERTON SUMMARIZED AND PARAPHRASED SELECTED PORTIONS OF THOSE MEMORANDA. IN OTHER WORDS, HE SUMMARIZED WITH REFERENCE TO THE MEMORANDA, FOR THE MOST PART, CONVERSATIONS THE SECRETARY HAD WITH VARIOUS LEADERS.

DID THE SECRETARY, IN HIS OWN CONVERSATIONS WITH SHEEHAN SUMMARIZE, WITHOUT REFERENCE TO MEMORANDA NECESSARILY, BUT SUMMARIZE FOR THE MOST PART CONVERSATIONS HE HAD WITH MIDDLE EAST LEADERS?

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A. NO, HE DID NOT.

HE MIGHT HAVE SAID TO ASAD OR SADAT OR GOLDA MEIR?

NO, HE DID NOT. HE DISCUSSED IN A VERY GENERAL WAY AS I UNDERSTAND IT, AND FOR THIRTY MINUTES OR LESS, THE GENERAL POLICY, THE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE, THE GENERAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE MIDDLE EAST EFFORT.

Q. LARRY, DID YOU DISCUSS WITH MR. ATHERTON THE GROUND RULES WHICH HE ESTABLISHED IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH SHEEHAN? DID SHEEHAN UNDERSTAND WHAT THESE DOCUMENTS WERE THAT MR. ATHERTON WAS READING FROM AND HOW HE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO USE THEM OR AUTHORIZED TO USE THEM?

A. DICK, I DID DISCUSS THAT WITH MR. ATHERTON. IT IS CLEAR -- AND THIS IS WITHOUT IMPUTING ANYTHING TO EITHER OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED -- THAT THERE WAS A SUBSTANTIAL

MISUNDERSTANDING, FAILURE OF COMMUNICATION, HOWEVER YOU WANT TO PUT IT, BETWEEN THE TWO, AND THAT WHAT I THINK MR. ATHERTON EXPECTED WOULD BE THE USE OF THIS INFORMATION WAS NOT WHAT MR. SHEEHAN UNDERSTOOD MR. ATHERTON TO EXPECT.

I AM NOT SAYING -- AND I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THIS -- THAT ON EITHER SIDE THERE WAS BAD FAITH.

Q. LARRY, I THINK WE COULD PERHAPS GET AT THE POINT MURREY WAS TRYING TO GET AT IN ANOTHER WAY. EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM HAS BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS. AS SOON AS YOU PICK UP A PHONE AND TALK TO AN OFFICER YOU HAVE A BACKGROUND BRIEFING. THE RULES ARE UNDERSTOOD. HE DOES NOT WRITE A MEMO TO HIS BOSS, MUCH LESS TO THE SECRETARY, ASKING FOR PERMISSION TO HAVE A BACKGROUND BRIEFING. SO WHEN YOU HAVE THIS KIND OF WRITTEN BACK AND FORTH, THERE IS A PRESUMPTION THAT SOMETHING MORE WAS EXPECTED BY MR. SHEEHAN THAN THE NORMAL BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON THE ONE HAND, AND THAT MR. ATHERTON EXPECTED TO GIVE SOMETHING MORE THAN THE NORMAL BACKGROUND BRIEFING.

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THEREFORE, SINCE THERE ARE TWO PIECES OF PAPER THAT YOU MENTIONED -- THE LETTER FROM SHEEHAN TO ATHERTON, AND THE MEMO FROM ATHERTON TO THE SECRETARY, MIGHT THOSE BE MADE AVAILABLE AS DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF THE TYPE OF ARRANGEMENT THAT WAS EXPECTED?

A. WHICH ARE THE TWO DOCUMENTS AGAIN YOU ARE INTERESTED IN?

Q. I BELIEVE YOU MENTIONED A LETTER FROM SHEEHAN TO ATHERTON. AND THEN THE MEMO FROM ATHERTON TO THE SECRETARY.

A. I DON'T KNOW. I'LL HAVE TO CHECK THAT. I HAVE NO IDEA WHETHER WE CAN MAKE THOSE AVAILABLE.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE BACKGROUND RULES BETWEEN ATHERTON AND SHEEHAN AS ATHERTON UNDERSTOOD THEM?

A. I, JERRY, DON'T WANT TO GO INTO ANY FURTHER DETAIL ON CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN ATHERTON --

Q. WELL, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD HERE ON BACKGROUND, BUT THAT'S A VERY GENERAL TERM.

A. NO, NO, ALL RIGHT, THAT'S RIGHT. BUT THAT IS IN REFERENCE TO WHAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE AUTHORIZED MR. ATHERTON TO DO. AND I WAS VERY SPECIFIC ON THAT, AND I CAN READ IT AGAIN IF YOU WANT.

Q. NO, THAT IS NOT NECESSARY.

Q. LARRY, WITHOUT GETTING INTO THE SPECIFICS OF OZZIE'S QUESTION, I WONDER IF YOU COULD ADDRESS YOURSELF TO THE GENERAL THRUST OF IT, THOUGH. IT SEEMS TO ME TO BE A VALID POINT. WHY WOULD MR. ATHERTON FEEL IT NECESSARY TO SEND A MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO CONDUCT WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY NORMAL BUSINESS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT; THAT IS, TO GIVE A BACKGROUND BRIEFING?

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A. THIS WAS NOT, IN THE FIRST PLACE, A BACKGROUND BRIEFING. THIS WAS A SUGGESTION BY MR. SHEEHAN THAT HE WAS GOING TO BE DOING A BOOK ON THE SUBJECT AND HE WOULD LIKE TO TALK



TO THE PEOPLE INVOLVED. AND ROY ATHERTON, RIGHTLY, SENT A MEMORANDUM, YOU KNOW, SENT A MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY IN WHICH HE SAID THIS WAS THE PROPOSAL AND THAT HE WOULD LIKE THE SECRETARY'S APPROVAL TO GIVE BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS ON THE SUBJECT.

THE SECRETARY -- AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE A MEMO BACK FROM THE SECRETARY FOR THE SECRETARY TO APPROVE A RECOMMENDATION. THAT IS THE FIRST POINT.

NOW, THE ISSUE, GENTLEMEN -- AND I WILL TRY TO STATE IT A DIFFERENT WAY TO GET AT THE POINT YOU ARE ALL RAISING -- THERE IS CLEARLY ON THE EXTREMES THE ISSUE OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, AND ON THE OTHER EXTREME THE NECESSITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS. THERE IS A WIDE AREA IN BETWEEN THAT IS EXTREMELY GREY. AND BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS GO INTO THAT WIDE GREY AREA ALL THE TIME. AND THE ISSUE IS ONE OF

SENIOR PEOPLE'S JUDGMENT -- AND I EMPHASIZE THAT WORD AGAIN, JUDGMENT -- ON WHAT THEY MAY AND THEY MAY NOT BACKGROUND ON WHA-THEY MAY AND THEY MAY NOT AND HOW THEY DO IT. WE CAN'T, YOU PEOPLE OR WE, DO BUSINESS WITHOUT SOME UNDERSTANDING THAT IN THAT GREY AREA THINGS ARE NOT GOING TO BE PRECISE.

Q. I DON'T THINK YOU ARE COMING TO THE BASIC POINT. THE POINT THAT IS BEING DISCUSSED IS TO THE EFFECT: DID MR. ATHERTON HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT HE COULD, IN FACT, READ FROM SUCH THINGS AS MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATIONS?

A. MR. ATHERTON IN HIS LETTER, AS I HAVE MADE CLEAR HERE, INDICATES HE HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT IT HAD TO COME FROM THE SECRETARY AT ALL, THAT HE MADE THAT DECISION HIMSELF.

Q. WHAT IS THIS GOING TO DO TO MR. ATHERTON'S CAREER?

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A. THAT IS A MATTER OF SUPPOSITION THAT I COULDN'T POSSIBLY ANSWER.

Q. ON THAT POINT, LARRY. COULD YOU TELL US MORE -- I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU MEAN BY SEVERE REPRIMAND AND IN THE CASE OF HAL SAUNDERS NOT QUITE SO SEVERE REPRIMAND. CAN YOU GIVE US SOME ENLIGHTENMENT ON WHAT THIS IS?

A. YES. IT IS THE DEGREE OF CRITICISM, THE DEGREE OF FINDING OF FAULT ON THE PART OF THE SECRETARY IN HIS

LETTERS TO MR. ATHERTON AND TO MR. SAUNDERS. AND THAT IS THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SEVERITY OF THE REPRIMAND. IN ONE CASE HE IS OBVIOUSLY MORE SEVERE THAN IN THE OTHER IN TERMS OF THE CONTENT OF THE LETTER TO THE MAN INVOLVED.

Q. LARRY, I MUST SAY YOU REALLY ARE NOT ADDRESSING THE CORE QUESTION HERE AT ALL. THE CORE QUESTION IS THE UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH A LETTER IS WRITTEN BY AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE SECRETARY SAYING, "SOMEONE IS IN HERE ASKING COOPERATION TO WRITE A BOOK, "WHICH MEANS, AS WE ALL KNOW -- AS YOU KNOW AND WE KNOW -- THAT THIS REQUEST IS BEING MADE FOR EXTRA-ORDINARY CLEARANCE AUTHORITY TO BE GIVEN TO AN OFFICIAL TO SHOW THAT INQUIRING WRITER EXCEPTIONAL INFORMATION WHICH IS NOT NORMALLY CONVEYED IN THE COURSE OF USUAL BACKGROUNDS. A. MURREY, YOU ARE MAKING ALL SORTS OF ASSUMPTIONS I AM NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL. OBVIOUSLY, I DON'T WRITE A MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY AND SAY, "MURREY MARDER HAS INVITED ME TO LUNCH TODAY; MAY I GO?" ON THE OTHER HAND, IF YOU WERE INTERESTED IN DOING A LONG SERIES ON SALT AND YOU WANTED TO TALK TO ME OR SIXTEEN OTHER PEOPLE I PROBABLY WOULD WRITE THE SECRETARY AND SAY, "MURREY MARDER IS DOING A MAJOR PIECE ON SALT. YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IT. I WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO COOPERATE WITH HIM ON IT." AND IF HE CAME BACK AND HAD CHECKED IT, "YES, YOU MAY," THEN IT IS ON MY RESPONSIBILITY FROM THAT POINT ON THE DEGREE TO WHICH I MARCH ALONG WITH YOU AND THE INFORMATION I GIVE. ; I DON'T FIND THIS UNUSUAL. I DON'T FIND IT PECULIAR. UNCLASSIFIED

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IT IS DONE ON MANY OCCASIONS IN THIS BUILDING. THE DISTINCTION YOU HAVE TO MAKE--YOU'VE MADE IT BUT THEN GONE ON WELL BEYOND IT -- IS BETWEEN A ONE-TIME, HALF AN HOUR MEETING WITH YOU OR ANY OTHER NEWSMAN TO DISCUSS A SUBJECT AND WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY A LONGER TERM, MORE DETAILED EXAMINATION OF A SPECIFIC ISSUE.

THAT DOES NOT MEAN IN ANY SENSE THAT THE ISSUE OF JUDGEMENT ON THE PART OF THE PEOPLE PARTICIPATING, REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, IS NOT STILL AN ISSUE. NOW, WHAT YOU ARE SAYING, IN EFFECT, IS THAT IN EACH SPECIFIC CASE THE SECRETARY WOULD HAVE TO SIT DOWN AND SAY, "YES, YOU MAY DISCUSS A, BUT YOU MAY NOT DISCUSS B." YOU KNOW, HE IS A BUSY MAN -- WE ARE ALL BUSY MEN. HE GIVES A

GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THIS MAY PROCEED ON THE BASIS OF AN ASSUMPTION THAT AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY, OR SOME OTHER SENIOR OFFICIAL IN THIS DEPARTMENT, HAS JUDGMENT ON WHAT HE MAY AND MAY NOT DO.

Q. WELL THEN, LET ME ASK YOU A FEW SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS.

I AM TOLD THAT THE SECRETARY'S RELATIONSHIP TO MR. SHEEHAN EXTENDED BEYOND WHAT HAS BEEN CONVEYED HERE IN BRIEFINGS. I AM TOLD THAT THE SECRETARY MADE EFFORTS OF HIS OWN TO TRY TO ARRANGE INTERVIEWS FOR MR. SHEEHAN, THAT HE TOLD HIM, I AM TOLD, THAT HE WOULD TRY TO HELP HIM SEE OFFICIALS OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS. IS THAT CORRECT?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE SECRETARY DID, SO I WILL HAVE TO CHECK IT.

Q. LARRY, ON THE SAME LINE, I UNDERSTAND THAT BEFORE THE FIRST ATHERTON REQUEST THERE WAS A LETTER FROM PROFESSOR HUNTINGTON AT HARVARD, AN OLD FRIEND OF THE SECRETARY'S, ON BEHALF OF MR. SHEEHAN, ASKING FOR ACCREDITATION AND THE

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RIGHT TO TALK TO PEOPLE IN THE DEPARTMENT, AND THAT KISSINGER REPLIED. IS THAT CORRECT?

A. I DON'T KNOW. I WILL HAVE TO CHECK IT.

Q. LARRY, WERE OTHER WRITERS IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, PEOPLE DOING OTHER ARTICLES OR OTHER BOOKS, BRIEFED ON THE BASIS OF MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATION?

A. NOT IN MY EXPERIENCE OR TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO.

Q. LARRY, DO YOU KNOW THE DATE OF THE EXCHANGE, THE MEMO FROM ATHERTON TO THE SECRETARY?

A. I WILL HAVE TO GET THAT.

Q. WAS IT IN APRIL?

Q. DID MR. ATHERTON --

A. WAIT JUST A SECOND. I MAY HAVE THAT HERE. YES. APRIL 18, 1975.

Q. CAN I JUST ASK A FOLLOW-UP? IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED BY SOME PEOPLE THAT A MOTIVATION BEHIND THE SUGGESTION BY ROY ATHERTON AND THE SECRETARY'S AGREEMENT WAS THE FACT THAT THERE HAD BEEN REPORTS OF THIS MATTI GOLAN BOOK COMING OUT, WHICH WAS GOING TO BE CRITICAL OF THE SECRETARY. WAS THERE ANY FEELING THAT THIS WAS TO BALANCE THE RECORD OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

A. NOT ON THE BASIS OF ANYTHING I KNOW, BERNIE.

Q. LARRY, DID MR. ATHERTON WRITE A SIMILAR BREST-BEATING LETTER?

A. MR. ATHERTON? I SAID HE WROTE A LETTER.

Q. EXCUSE ME. MR. SAUNDERS.

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A. NO, HE DID NOT. IT WAS ON THE BASIS OF AN ORAL DISCUSSION WITH MR. SAUNDERS.

Q. ALL THIS DONE WITH LETTERS. HAVEN'T THESE HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS SPOKEN TO ONE ANOTHER?

A. ALL WHAT DONE BY LETTERS?

Q. WELL, THE "THIS IS WHAT I DID" BY ATHERTON, AND THE REPRIMAND THAT WENT BACK.

A. THERE WERE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN MR. ATHERTON AND MYSELF; THERE WERE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND MR. ATHERTON; AND BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND MR. SAUNDERS; AND BETWEEN ME AND MR. SAUNDERS; AS WELL AS THE LETTER.

Q. DID ANYBODY IN THE DEPARTMENT SUGGEST THAT MR. SHEEHAN WRITE TO MR. ATHERTON IN THE FIRST PLACE?

A. I DON'T KNOW. I AM TOLD ON ONE OCCASION THAT SOMEBODY, A COLLEAGUE OF YOURS, CALLED ME ON THE PHONE SOMETIME AGO AND SUGGESTED TO ME THAT MR. SHEEHAN'S EXERCISE WOULD BE A WORTHWHILE ONE. FRANKLY, I DON'T REMEMBER IT. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER ANYBODY SUGGESTED TO SHEEHAN THAT HE WRITE TO ATHERTON OR NOT.

I WOULD SUPPOSE IF SOMEONE WERE TO CALL ME ON IT I WOULD SAY, "LOOK THE PLACE TO GO IS TO WRITE A LETTER TO ROY AND LET HIM TAKE IT FROM THERE."

Q. DID THEY WORK TOGETHER?

A. WHO?

Q. ROY AND SHEEHAN. AT ONE POINT, YOU KNOW, OVERSEAS. SHEEHAN WAS, WHAT, AN INFORMATION OFFICER IN BEIRUT AND CAIRO?

A. NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE. I THINK THEY KNEW EACH OTHER, BUT I DON'T THINK THEY WORKED TOGETHER.

Q. IS THERE ANY FRIENDSHIP THERE, LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP?  
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A. HE HAS KNOWN HIM FOR SOME TIME. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER HE IS A CLOSE FRIEND OR NOT.

Q. CAN I GO BACK TO THE ATHERTON LETTER? YOU WERE TALKING EARLIER IN THE WEEK ABOUT MOTIVATION.

A. I WASN'T.

Q. NO, THE SPOKESMAN WAS.

DOES MR. ATHERTON SAY IN THE LETTER THAT WHAT HE DID HE THOUGHT WAS WITHIN THE GUIDELINES THAT HAD BEEN SET OUT BETWEEN HIM AND THE SECRETARY?

A. NO. -

Q. HE DOESN'T SAY THAT AT ALL?

A. NO.

Q. IS THAT HIS BELIEF THOUGH, ASIDE FROM WHAT IS IN THE LETTER?

A. NO.

Q. DOES HE ACKNOWLEDGE THEN THAT HE DID SOMETHING HE SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT WAS HIS MOTIVATION IN DOING IT?

A. I HAVE SAID IN THE STATEMENT THAT THE SECRETARY AND I HAD NO QUESTION ABOUT MR. ATHERTON'S MOTIVATION. I DON'T INTEND TO TRY TO GO INTO A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF ANYBODY'S MOTIVATION. AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED, THE MOTIVATION WAS ABOVE REPROACH. IT IS THE METHOD AND THE JUDGMENT THAT IS SUBJECT TO REPROACH, AND I THINK I REALLY OUGHT TO LEAVE IT THERE.

Q. AGAIN, YOU HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THERE WAS A MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SHEEHAN AND ATHERTON -- AND POSSIBLY SAUNDERS--  
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ABOUT THE GUIDELINES.

A. THAT'S RIGHT.

Q. THE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE AVAILABLE IN THIS CASE -- AS TO WHAT EACH MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT THE GUIDELINES WERE -- EXIST, I PRESUME, IN THE LETTER AND THE MEMO. SHEEHAN ASKED FOR SOMETHING AND RECEIVED SOMETHING. IN THE LETTER WE WOULD KNOW WHAT HE ASKED FOR.

A. THAT IS CORRECT. I TOLD YOU THAT A DECISION WAS MADE THAT THESE LETTERS WOULD NOT BE RELEASED. WE ARE GOING TO STAND ON THE STATEMENT I'VE MADE TO YOU.

Q. DID HE ASK SPECIFICALLY FOR DETAILS OF CONVERSATIONS -- DID MR. SHEEHAN ASK, IN HIS LETTER TO MR. ATHERTON -- AND/OR DID MR. ATHERTON IN HIS MEMO TO THE SECRETARY -- SAY THAT THERE WAS A REQUEST FOR DETAILS OF THE CONVERSATIONS THE SECRETARY MIGHT HAVE HAD ON THESE DIPLOMATIC SHUTTLES?

A. NO, BUT, YOU KNOW, BERNIE, WE'VE GOT TO BE CAREFUL WITH WORDS LIKE "DETAILS." NO. WHAT SHEEHAN'S LETTER BASICALLY DID WAS DESCRIBE THE PROJECT AND ASK IF THE DEPARTMENT WAS PREPARED TO BE COOPERATIVE.

Q. WHAT IS THE DURATION --

A. THERE'S SOMEBODY OVER HERE WHO HAD A QUESTION.

A Q. HAS MR. ATHERTON CONSIDERED RESIGNING?

A. NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO.

Q. AND HAS THE SECRETARY CONSIDERED ASKING HIM TO RESIGN?

A. I'D RATHER NOT COMMENT ON THAT.

Q. MR. EAGLEBURGER, ONE SPECIFIC QUESTION.

IN YOUR STATEMENT YOU SAY NO PRESIDENTIAL CONVERSATIONS OR CONVERSATIONS WITH HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT WERE  
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DESCRIBED. ARE YOU SAYING NOW THAT --

A. YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT PRESIDENTIAL WITH HEADS OF STATE OR NOT?

Q. RIGHT. YOU ARE SAYING THEN THAT THE PASSAGE IN THE SHEEHAN ARTICLE DESCRIBING CONVERSATION AS BETWEEN PRESIDENTS FORD AND NIXON AND PRESIDENT SADAT DID NOT COME FROM THIS DEPARTMENT.

A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. HOW MUCH TIME DID THEY SPEND TOGETHER -- --ATHERTON AND SHEEHAN? HOW MANY TIMES DID THEY MEET?

A. I'LL BE GLAD TO GET THAT FOR YOU, JERRY, AND I HAVEN'T IT. IT'S A FAIR AMOUNT OF TIME, BUT I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW MANY HOURS.

Q. LARRY, YOU MAY HAVE ADDRESSED THIS QUESTION BEFORE I CAME IN. I'M SORRY I WAS LATE. BUT PRECISELY WHY ARE YOU NOT GOING TO RELEASE THESE LETTERS -- SINCE THEY SEEM TO REPRESENT THE MOST CONCRETE DATA AVAILABLE ON WHO SAID WHAT TO WHOM?

A. GENTLEMEN, IT IS FAIRLY OBVIOUS, IT SEEMS TO ME, THAT THIS IS A PAINFUL PROCESS FOR EVERYBODY INVOLVED AND THAT WE HAVE DECIDED THAT THE BEST WAY TO PROCEED IS TO DESCRIBE TO YOU DETAILS THAT WE FEEL ARE NECESSARY AND TO LET THE ISSUE IN ITS TOTALITY REMAIN BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE MAN WHO IS BEING REPRIMANDED.

MR. FUNSETH: ARE THERE ANY MORE QUESTIONS?

Q. CAN YOU RULE OUT THAT THE SECRETARY HIMSELF --

A. I CAN'T HEAR YOU.

Q. CAN YOU RULE OUT THAT THE SECRETARY HIMSELF --

Q. SPEAK LOUDER, LARS.  
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Q. CAN YOU RULE OUT THAT THE SECRETARY HIMSELF SUGGESTED TO MR. SHEEHAN THAT HE WRITE TO MR. ATHERTON?

A. NO, I CANNOT UNTIL I ASK THE SECRETARY. I DON'T KNOW

THAT I UNDERSTAND WHAT DIFFERENCE THAT MAKES, BUT I'LL CHECK IT. (ANSWER SUPPLIED LATER TO THE PRESS: NO, HE DID NOT).

Q. WELL, THE DIFFERENCE IT MAKES IS THAT IF MR. ATHERTON WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT MR. SHEEHAN WAS WRITING FOR PERMISSION IN CONNECTION WITH SOMETHING THAT HAD ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSED BETWEEN MR. SHEEHAN AND THE SECRETARY, IT MIGHT HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE IN MR. ATHERTON'S PERCEPTION.

A. THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT YOU WERE LEADING TO, AND I WANT TO SAY FOR THE UMPTEENTH TIME -- AS I SAID IN THE STATEMENT -- THAT MR. ATHERTON HAS MADE IT CLEAR IN HIS LETTER THAT THERE WAS NO MISCONCEPTION ON HIS PART. HE DID NOT AT ANY POINT BELIEVE THAT HE HAD SPECIFIC PERMISSION FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO READ FROM, QUOTE, OR ANYTHING ELSE, MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATION; AND HE ADMITS THAT IT WAS A MISTAKE IN JUDGMENT.

I WILL FIND OUT WHETHER, IN FACT, THE SECRETARY AT ANY POINT SUGGESTED TO MR. SHEEHAN THAT HE WRITE THE LETTER, BUT I WANT TO DENY THE ASSUMPTION THAT COMES FROM IT

EVEN IF HE DID. (ANSWER SUPPLIED LATER TO THE PRESS: NO, HE DID NOT).

Q. CAN I MAKE AN APPEAL FOR THE RELEASE OF THE ATHERTON LETTER?

A. YES.

Q. I'D LIKE TO JOIN IN THAT ALSO.

A. YES.

Q. BECAUSE YOUR WHOLE STORY IS REALLY BASED ON THIS EX-UNCLASSIFIED

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CHANGE.

A. I UNDERSTAND.

Q. THE INITIAL EXCHANGE.

Q. WE DON'T NEED TO HAVE THE SECRETARY'S --

A. WE TAKE THE POINT.

Q. THE LETTERS I WAS ASKING ABOUT BEFORE, LARRY, WERE NOT THE LETTERS BETWEEN ROY ATHERTON AND THE SECRETARY OF



STATE BUT THE LETTER BETWEEN SHEEHAN TO ATHERTON --

A. I UNDERSTAND THAT. AND THAT POINT IS ALSO TAKEN.

Q. AND WHY IS THAT PART OF THE PAINFUL PROCESS? I DON'T --  
I CANNOT --

A. I'M SORRY. I THOUGHT WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT THESE  
ARTICLES --

Q. NO. I WAS JUST TALKING ABOUT THE ORIGINAL EXCHANGE.

A. I WILL LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITIES. I DON'T KNOW AT  
THIS POINT. (ANSWER SUPPLIED LATER TO THE PRESS: MR.  
SHEEHAN HAS INFORMED THE DEPARTMENT HE PREFERS THAT HIS  
LETTER TO MR. ATHERTON NOT BE RELEASED. THE DEPARTMENT  
CONCURS.)

Q. CAN YOU TELL US ANYTHING MORE ABOUT HOW THAT MISUNDER-  
STANDING MIGHT HAVE DEVELOPED BETWEEN ATHERTON AND SHEEHAN?

A. OTHER THAN TO DESCRIBE IT, AS BEST I CAN, AS A MIS-  
UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO ON THE BASIS OF THE CONVER-  
SATIONS THE TWO HAD AS TO WHAT THE GROUND RULES WERE.  
I CAN'T GO BEYOND THAT.

I THINK THEY BOTH THOUGHT THEY WERE DEALING WITH A  
DIFFERENT SET OF RULES THAN THE OTHER THOUGHT THEY WERE  
DEALING WITH.

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Q. IS THERE ANY HISTORICAL PRECEDENT, OR WHAT'S THE MOST  
RECENT HISTORICAL PRECEDENT FOR A SECRETARY OF STATE  
REPRIMANDING AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE?

A. THE ONLY ONE I AM AT ALL FAMILIAR WITH WAS ONE WITH  
FOY KOHLER SOME YEARS AGO.

MR. FUNSETH: O.K.? THANK YOU, LARRY.

Q. THANK YOU.

END EAGLEBURGER.

Q. BOB, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT THE CRISIS IN  
LEBANON?

FUNSETH:

A. I THINK THAT THE MAIN THING WE WOULD SAY IS WHAT WE HAVE SAID IN THE PAST: OUR HOPE REMAINS THAT THE LEBANESE WILL FIND A SOLUTION FOR THE PROBLEM THAT HAS CONFRONTED THEIR COUNTRY -- WHICH WILL PRESERVE THE INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THEIR COUNTRY-- AND PRESERVE THEIR NATIONAL UNITY AND COHESION.

WE WOULD ALSO HOPE THAT IN THIS PARTICULAR PERIOD, THAT THERE WILL NOT BE ANY RENEWED THREATS TO THE STABILITY OF LEBANON.

AS FAR AS WHAT IS HAPPENING IN LEBANON, ITSELF, THE DETAILS CERTAINLY ARE NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR TO ME BUT WE ARE FOLLOWING THE SITUATION AS IT UNFOLDS, AND WE ARE

Q. BOB, COULD I ASK YOU --

Q. WHEN YOU SAY, "THREATS" DO YOU MEAN EXTERNAL OR INTERNAL -- OR BOTH?

A. BOTH.

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Q. YOU MEAN "BOTH."

IS THAT AN ADMONITION TO ANY STATE IN THE AREA THAT YOU COULD TELL US ABOUT?

A. NO, IT IS A GENERAL REAFFIRMATION OF STATEMENTS THAT WE HAVE MADE IN THE PAST ABOUT LEBANON.

Q. BOB, YOU USED STRONGER LANGUAGE THAN "HOPE" IN THE PAST, IN TALKING ABOUT THREATS, AND PARTICULARLY FROM THE OUTSIDE. YOU ARE NOT MEANING TO WEAKEN THAT?

A. I HAVE NOT READ THE TEXTS OF WHAT I SAID BEFORE, BUT, NO, THERE IS NO CHANGE IN OUR POSITION.

Q. BOB, WERE YOU REFERRING, IN THE "EXTERNAL" TO SYRIA AND ISRAEL?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO IDENTIFY WHERE ANY THREATS MIGHT COME FROM.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "RENEWED?" DOES THAT MEAN THAT SOMEBODY HAS THREATENED BEFORE, AND YOU HOPE THEY DON'T DO IT AGAIN?

DO YOU MEAN "RENEWED?"

A. YES, I MEAN RENEWED.

Q. IS THAT THE WORD YOU MEAN?

A. RIGHT.

Q. ALL RIGHT, THEN WHO HAS THREATENED THE STABILITY?

A. THERE HAVE BEEN THREATS TO THE STABILITY OF LEBANON IN THE PAST.

Q. FROM WHERE?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO IDENTIFY WHERE THOSE THREATS HAVE UNCLASSIFIED

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COME FROM.

Q. HOW SERIOUS DO YOU CONSIDER THE SITUATION IN LEBANON, VIS-A-VIS THE MASSING TROOPS ON ISRAEL, ON ISRAEL'S BORDER?

A. I AM JUST NOT IN A POSITION TO ASSESS THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION IN LEBANON. IT IS SERIOUS, BUT I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO ASSESS IT.

Q. BACK IN LEBANON, HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONTACT WITH THE SYRIANS?

YOU SEEM TO HAVE -- YOU THOUGHT THEIR ROLE WAS CONSTRUCTIVE A FEW WEEKS AGO. NOW IT SEEMS THAT THE SYRIANS -- NOT PART OF THIS COUP -- BUT ANYWAY KNOW ABOUT IT AND SEEM TO ACCEPT IT.

SO, HAVE YOU BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE SYRIANS ABOUT IT?

A. IN THE FIRST PLACE, I FRANKLY DO NOT KNOW WHETHER WE HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH ANYBODY ABOUT IT. IN ANY EVENT, WE NORMALLY DO NOT DISCUSS DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES WE HAVE WITH COUNTRIES, ON ANY SUBJECT. SO I AM NOT PREPARED TO ADDRESS IT.

Q. NO, I AM NOT ASKING THE DETAILS. SIMPLY WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAVE HAD ANY CONTACT.

A. I THINK ALL PARTIES CONCERNED UNDERSTAND OUR POSITION, AND NOT ONLY FROM PUBLIC STATEMENTS SUCH AS I HAVE MADE

TODAY.

Q. DOES THE SITUATION IN LEBANON POSE ANY THREAT TO ISRAEL?

A. I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION.

Q. DOES SYRIA CONTINUE TO PLAY THE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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YOU SAY IT PLAYED A FEW WEEKS AGO?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT ROLE SYRIA IS PLAYING TODAY IN THE SITUATION IN LEBANON.

Q. HAS ANY DECISION BEEN MADE YET ON WINDING UP THE CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS ON THE C-130'S AND WHETHER TO SEND A LETTER OF NOTIFICATION?

A. I WILL HAVE TO CHECK ON THAT, BERNIE, I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT TODAY.

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## Message Attributes

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